



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Proposed Collection of Information; Comment Request: Biological Sciences Proposal Classification Form

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY:

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is announcing plans to renew clearance of this collection. In accordance with the requirement of Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we are providing opportunity for public comment on this action. After obtaining and considering public comment, NSF will prepare the submission requesting OMB clearance of this collection for no longer than 3 years.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

DATES: Written comments should be received by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] to be assured of consideration. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding the information collection and requests for copies of the proposed information collection request should be addressed to Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Rm. 295, Arlington, VA 22230, or by e-mail to splimpto@nsf.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne Plimpton on (703) 292-7556 or send e-mail to splimpto@nsf.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339, which is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year (including federal holidays).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title of Collection: "Biological Sciences Proposal Classification Form"

OMB Approval Number: 3145-0203.

Expiration Date of Approval: September 30, 2012.

Type of Request: Intent to seek approval to renew an information collection for three years.

Proposed Project: Five organizational units within the Directorate of Biological Sciences of the National Science Foundation will use the Biological Sciences Proposal Classification Form. They are the Division of Biological Infrastructure (DBI), the Division of

Environmental Biology (DEB), the Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (MCB) , the Division of Integrative Organismal Systems IOS) and Emerging Frontiers (EF). All scientists submitting proposals to these units will be asked to complete an electronic version of the Proposal Classification Form. The form consists of brief questions about the substance of the research and the investigator's previous federal support. Each division will have a slightly different version of the form. In this way, submitters will only confront response choices that are relevant to their discipline.

Use of the Information: The information gathered with the Biological Sciences Proposal Classification Form serves two main purposes. The first is facilitation of the proposal review process. Since peer review is a key component of NSF's grant-making process, it is imperative that proposals are reviewed by scientists with appropriate expertise. The information collected with the Proposal Classification Form helps ensure that the proposals are evaluated by specialists who are well versed in appropriate subject matter. This helps maintain a fair and equitable review process.

The second use of the information is program evaluation. The Directorate is committed to investing in a range of substantive areas. With data from this collection, the Directorate can calculate submission rates and funding rates in specific areas of research. Similarly, the information can be used to identify emerging areas of research, evaluate changing infrastructure needs in the research community, and track the amount of international research. As the National Science Foundation is committed to funding cutting-edge science, these factors all have implications for program management.

The Directorate of Biological Sciences has a continuing commitment to monitor its information collection in order to preserve

its applicability and necessity. Through periodic updates and revisions, the Directorate ensures that only useful, non-redundant information is collected. These efforts will reduce excessive reporting burdens

Burden on the Public: The Directorate estimates that an average of five minutes is expended for each proposal submitted. An estimated 6,500 responses are expected during the course of one year for a total of 542 public burden hours annually.

Expected Respondents: Individuals

Estimated Number of Responses: 6,500

Estimated Number of Respondents: 6,500

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 542 hours

Frequency of Responses: On occasion

Dated: July 2, 2012

Suzanne H. Plimpton,
Reports Clearance Officer,
National Science Foundation.

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